

Worksession

Agenda Item #	8
Meeting Date	7 March 2005
Prepared By	Sara Anne Daines HCD Director
Approved By	Barbara Matthews City Manager

Discussion Item	Arts and Humanities Commission Presentation of Takoma Park Cultural Plan
Background	<p>Since August 2004, the primary focus of the Arts and Humanities Commission has been, as required by its enabling ordinance, the preparation of a long-range master plan for the development of a thriving arts community in Takoma Park and the utilization of public facilities for art related activities. Working in partnership with the community and area arts and humanities groups, the Commission has completed its task and will be presenting a summary of their findings and recommendations to the Council on Monday, March 7.</p> <p>As noted in the Executive Summary, “The Cultural Plan of Takoma Park reflects findings and strategies gathered and analyzed over nine months of planning and assessment involving hundreds of cultural advocates, community leaders and citizens. It is presented as a living document—a framework for future cultural development—to be owned and adapted by the community as recommendations are refined and developed. The Cultural Plan catalyzes a new beginning for citywide cultural development as the Arts and Humanities Commission takes the helm in supporting and helping guide that development.”</p> <p>A summary of the plan will be presented by members of the Arts and Humanities Commission. The input provided by the Council during the worksession will, to the extent possible, be incorporated into the final document.</p>
Policy	<p>“To expand public awareness of, involvement in, and access to the arts and arts opportunities and to create an environment which promotes interaction, dialogue, discussion and lasting relationships between artists and the public.”</p> <p>Ordinance 2003-01 Establishing the Takoma Park Arts and Humanities Commission</p>
Fiscal Impact	To be determined as individual recommendations are implemented.
Attachments	DRAFT - Cultural Master Plan Executive Summary. The commission will be meeting this weekend and may make minor changes to the summary.
Recommendation	Council to provide input on the recommendations forwarded in the Cultural Master Plan following the presentation by the Arts and Humanities Commission.
Special Consideration	

Takoma Park Cultural Plan

Executive Summary

The Cultural Plan of Takoma Park reflects findings and strategies gathered and analyzed over nine months of planning and assessment involving hundreds of cultural advocates, community leaders and citizens. It is presented as a living document—a framework for future cultural development—to be owned and adapted by the community as recommendations are refined and developed. The Cultural Plan catalyzes a new beginning for citywide cultural development as the Arts and Humanities Commission takes the helm in supporting and helping guide that development.

Cultural Planning Process

As part of the enabling legislation, the Arts and Humanities Commission was tasked with developing a master plan for the cultural development of Takoma Park, MD. In May 2004, the planning process was launched with the creation of the Commission's planning subcommittee. The planning subcommittee identified a four component approach in assessing issues, needs, strengths, challenges and strategies: a public survey, a community meeting, interviews with community leaders and interviews with local cultural organizations and individual artists and humanists.

Community input and background materials from all phases have been synthesized into the current document.

Arts and Humanities Needs

Cultural needs and aspirations in five primary categories were apparent from input gained at the community meeting, interviews and surveys. They are listed here in order of priority as established by the Commission.

- Increased outreach efforts including increased awareness and networking opportunities
- Increased opportunities to incorporate cultural education and programming into the fabric of the community
- Increased opportunities to enhance the Takoma Park landscape with public art installations
- Increased facilities to present and make art
- Increased funding

Recommended Strategies

Recommendations are grouped by topic in priority order:

Outreach

Increase audience numbers and opportunities to publicize cultural events and programs; expand awareness of events; facilitate networking opportunities between the cultural community and the public; promote cross-discipline communication.

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Cultural Education and Programs

Foster an atmosphere/environment for children and adults to experience the arts and humanities; encourage public education and lifelong learning in and through the arts and humanities through partnerships; promote a community of culturally aware residents

Public Art

Facilitate opportunities for public art in Takoma Park; enhance landscape of Takoma Park; create opportunities for local artists and humanists; create a sense of place for residents and visitors

Facilities and Venues

Create a cultural infrastructure and identify focal points within community; enable a match between performance/exhibition spaces and cultural needs; maximize cultural use of the community center, a center of opportunity for viewing, participating and displaying art that catalyze unity and interest in the arts and humanities

Funding

Enrich art production and outreach; enable funding for arts and humanities organizations, programs and projects; improve access to information about fund raising workshops

A Vision of Arts and Humanities

The Arts and Humanities Commission will play an important role as a citywide service organization dedicated to promoting, coordinating and strengthening public programs to further cultural development of Takoma Park.

Implementation

The following are suggested strategies in implementing the Cultural Plan in the coming year:

- Distribute Cultural Plan to the public: a hard copy version of the Executive Summary will be made available, the full version will be available on-line via the City Web site.
- Present the Cultural Plan to local organizations, associations and clubs.
- Partner with cultural organizations in Takoma Park to facilitate recommended strategies
- Monitor and evaluate success of the Cultural Plan, update at least every two years according to the ordinance.
- The Commission will work in concert with the Montgomery County Arts and Humanities Commission and other cultural organizations to refine and develop specific actions to respond to the cultural needs and strategies generated through this cultural planning process.